



# U P D A T E

## St. Lucie County

September 15, 2007

**A Monthly Update  
of Current Events  
and Happenings  
within St. Lucie**

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This update is published monthly by the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners' Public Information Office. Direct inquiries to Ja' Net Pentz, Executive Assistant St. Lucie County 2300 Virginia Avenue Fort Pierce, FL 34982 772.462.1453 pentzj@co.st-lucie.fl.us

### **Board of County Commissioners Special Meetings & Workshops Scheduled**

- The Board of County Commissioners will hold the September Informal Monthly Meeting on Monday, September 24 at 1:30 p.m. in Conference Room 3.
- The Board of County Commissioners will hold the Annual Reorganization Meeting on Tuesday, November 13 at 9 a.m. in the Commission Chambers.

### **Parks & Recreation Offer Programs at Fort Pierce Community Center**

St. Lucie County's Parks & Recreation Department is offering tutoring lessons every Monday and Wednesday from 4:30 – 6 p.m. as well as an after-school program for students in kindergarten through fifth grade Monday through Friday at the Fort Pierce Community Center. Tutoring is available for students 8 – 12 years old and receive one-on-one tutoring in all subjects. Special attention will be focused on subjects that give your child difficulties. Students will have the opportunity to learn in a comfortable, quiet environment with experienced staff that can provide helpful academic support. Tutoring cost is \$40 per month, and registration is required. The after-school program, which is available to students in the green zone (north of Midway Road), runs Monday through Friday until 6 p.m., including early dismissal days. The after-school program is \$40 per week per student. Pre-registration is required. The Fort Pierce Community Center is located at 600 N. Indian River Drive, Fort Pierce. For more information call the St. Lucie County Parks & Recreation staff at (772) 462-1792.

### **Historical Museum Presents Early Cattle History**

Discover the rich heritage of our local cattle industry when the special exhibit, "Along the Cattle Trail," opens Saturday, September 22 at the St. Lucie County Historical Museum. An action-packed, fun-filled Family Day featuring re-enactors, games, music, and victuals highlights the day from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at the Museum, 414 Seaway Drive in Fort Pierce. Admission is \$5 per family. The "Along the Cattle Trail" exhibit, which runs through February 2008, includes Florida's early cattle history, Spanish and Seminole Indian cattlemen, the Civil War era Florida Cow Cavalry and the Cracker Trail. The exhibit highlights the lifestyles of St. Lucie County area cowhunters and cattle ranchers (including the selected history of pioneers, families and African American individuals) during the period from the late 1800s through 1950 and the end of the open range. Also among the featured topics in the photograph and artifact-rich exhibit will be the bushwackers, rustlers and the "law of the land," "tools of the trade," and the end of the open range. "Cowhunters" refers to the cowmen (and women) who would hunt and round up their cattle which roamed free in the backwoods and open range. Plan to visit the St. Lucie County Historical Museum and explore "Along the Cattle Trail" special exhibit as well as the museum 14 permanent exhibits of local history. The St. Lucie County Historical Museum is located at 414 Seaway Drive, under the South Bridge on Museum Pointe in Fort Pierce. The Museum provides permanent and special exhibits exploring the county's rich colorful history. Museum hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. and Sunday from noon – 4 p.m. A modest admission is charged: \$4 for adults, \$3.50 for seniors over 65, and \$1.50 for children 6-17 years. Children under 6 are free. Group rates and guided tours are also available by appointment. For further information, please contact Anne Sinnott, Museum Educator at (772) 462-1891.

### **After 13 Months, Prescription Drug Discount Card Saves \$1 Million For St. Lucie Residents**

In just 13 months time, St. Lucie County's participation in the national discount prescription drug card has saved local residents more than \$1 million when it comes to obtaining their medication. Last July, St. Lucie County launched a new program making free prescription drug discount cards available under a plan sponsored by the National Association of Counties (NACo) that offers average savings of 20 percent off the retail price of commonly prescribed drugs. The total number of initial prescriptions processed in July of 2006 was 1,281 for 752 residents. In July of this year that number jumped to 9,672 for 4,262 people. The cards may be used by all county residents, regardless of age, income, or existing health coverage, and are accepted at most of the county's pharmacies. A national network of more than 59,000 participating retail pharmacies also will honor the NACo prescription discount card. The NACo prescription discount card offers significant savings for the uninsured and underinsured residents of St. Lucie County, and even those fortunate to have prescription coverage can use the card to save money on drugs that are not covered by their health plan. Residents do not have to be Medicare beneficiaries to be eligible for this program. The cards can also be used to receive discounts on medication for pets. Additionally, there is no cost to county taxpayers for NACo and St. Lucie County to make these money saving cards available to all residents. Cards are available at all county offices; libraries; Health Department locations; participating pharmacies; St. Vincent de Paul Church in Port St. Lucie; Council on Aging locations in Fort Pierce and Port St. Lucie and on the county's website at [www.stlucieco.gov/community](http://www.stlucieco.gov/community). County residents can call toll free (877) 321-2652 or visit <https://naco.advancerx.com> for assistance with the program. The discount card program is administered by Caremark Rx, Inc. For more information, contact the County's Community Services Department at (772) 462-1777 or go to the website at <http://stlucieco.gov/community/naco.htm>. The National Association of Counties (NACo) is a full-service organization that provides legislative, research, technical and public affairs assistance to county governments. Created in 1935, NACo continues to ensure that the nation's 3,066 counties are heard and understood in the White House and Congress.

### **Tropical Soda Apple Beetles**

Tropical Soda Apple (TSA) is an invasive weed that can quickly take over valuable pasture grass lands and other natural areas. This is a particularly nasty plant with long thorns and fruits that look like miniature watermelons. This perennial prickly shrub, native to South America, has been spreading at an alarming rate during the last decade. Tropical soda apple was first discovered in Glades County, Florida, in 1988, and has since been reported throughout Florida and the Southern U.S. In Florida, over 1 million acres are currently estimated to be infested with tropical soda apple. Animals feed on the mature fruits of tropical soda apple and are primarily responsible for spreading the weed by passing the undigested seeds in their droppings. These weeds are also being found along highway right of ways and in newly developed subdivisions in the Treasure Coast. The University of Florida / St Lucie County Extension, the Division of Plant Industry and the Indian River Research and Education Center (IRREC) are joining together on a Tropical Soda Apple (TSA) biological control program. Host-specific beetles that feed on the TSA leaves and inhibit the spread of TSA are available to the public free-of-charge. Several ranchers in the county (including Bud Adams & Buzz Eaves) have been successfully using the TSA beetles to manage their TSA population. We would like to offer, free of charge, TSA beetles to ranchers and natural area managers that have a moderate to heavy infestation of TSA. These beetles are seasonal and will be available to the public for only a short period of time. To find out more information and to receive TSA beetles, call Ken Gioeli, University of Florida / St Lucie County Natural Resources Agent, at (772) 462-1660. Additional details are online at <http://kgioeli.ifas.ufl.edu>

### **Upcoming Events at the Oxbow Eco-Center**

**Guided Hikes** ~ Every Saturday at 10 a.m. Join an Oxbow naturalist as they lead visitors along a series of trails, discussing the plants and wildlife that live in the different habitats along the North Fork of the St. Lucie River. For more information about all Oxbow Eco-Center events call the staff at (772) 785-5833 or visit [www.stlucieco.gov/erd/oxbow](http://www.stlucieco.gov/erd/oxbow).

Joseph E. Smith, District 1 • Doug Coward, District 2 • Paula A. Lewis, District 3  
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